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RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC  
INFO RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 000126

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NSC FOR ABRAMS  
DRL/SEAS FOR RICKMAN  
BSC FOR SLATTERY, FRIEDMAN, DRUCKER  
L/HRR FOR HILL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/31/2028

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [ECON](#) [AR](#)

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR DEPT GUIDANCE ON EDUARDO SAIEGH CASE

REF: A. 07 BUENOS AIRES 1943

[1](#)B. 07 BUENOS AIRES 2142  
[1](#)C. 07 BUENOS AIRES 2292  
[1](#)D. 07 BUENOS AIRES 1924  
[1](#)E. 07 BUENOS AIRES 2291  
[1](#)F. 07 BUENOS AIRES 1745

Classified By: AMBASSADOR E. ANTHONY WAYNE FOR REASONS 1.4(B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request. See para 5.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Summary. The Ambassador has raised with cabinet-level GOA officials the case of Mr. Eduardo Saiegh, an Argentine citizen who in 1980 was kidnapped, tortured and dispossessed of a bank he owned during Argentina's 1976-83 military dictatorship (see ref A for background). The issue has turned out to be more complicated and thorny than originally envisioned. In order to ensure that we are advancing this issue in the most effective, coordinated fashion possible, post reiterates its (ref B) request for Department instructions. We have recently received a number of e-mails from Dr. Gregg Rickman, Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, Rabbi Morton Rosenthal the Anti-Defamation League's former Director of Latin America, and Mr. Saiegh himself, urging the Ambassador to raise Mr. Saiegh's case with Argentine President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner (CFK) and other GOA principals. End summary.

[1](#)3. (SBU) On January 30, the Ambassador received an e-mail from Rabbi Morton Rosenthal, the Anti-Defamation League's former Director of Latin America, requesting that the Ambassador raise Mr. Saiegh's case during his January 31 meeting with CFK. On January 31, Mr. Saiegh e-mailed the Ambassador with the same request, reiterating his offer to settle the case for approximately USD 15 million, which would be used to create a U.S.-Argentine investment fund. Also on January 31, post received e-mails from Dr. Gregg Rickman, the Department's Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, urging the Ambassador to raise the Saiegh case.

[1](#)4. (C) The Ambassador has discussed Mr. Saiegh's case with a number of senior Argentine officials, including Economy Minister Martin Lousteau (ref C), Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana (ref D), Secretary of Human Rights Eduardo Luis Duhalde (ref E), and former Minister of Economy Miguel Peirano (ref F). The issue has turned out to be more complicated than originally envisioned. In order to ensure that we are advancing this issue in the most effective, coordinated fashion possible, post reiterates its (ref B) request for Department instructions.

15. (SBU) Action Request: Post would appreciate Department guidance on how to proceed with Mr. Saiegh's case as requested in Ref B. Washington guidance is needed to determine next steps. Saiegh clearly wants the Embassy to broker a deal for him with the GoA. Since the GoA contends that Saiegh's case is still in court, we need to reconcile our desire to help Saiegh resolve his case with our respect for judicial autonomy. The Embassy is prepared to continue raising Saiegh's case with high and mid-level officials of the new administration that took office December 10. However, Post does not have local staff expertise in Argentine law to judge fully the merits put forth by parties in this case. In Post's view, the available options that might actually have some success would appear to require the USG to take at least an implicit position on the merits and facts of the case. In addition to the options outlined ref B, there may be other options evident from a Washington perspective. Post requests guidance and instructions before proceeding further.

WAYNE